Huddersfield Local History Society

Huddersfield Local History Society
huddersfieldhistory.org.uk

Newsletter No. 2
1984

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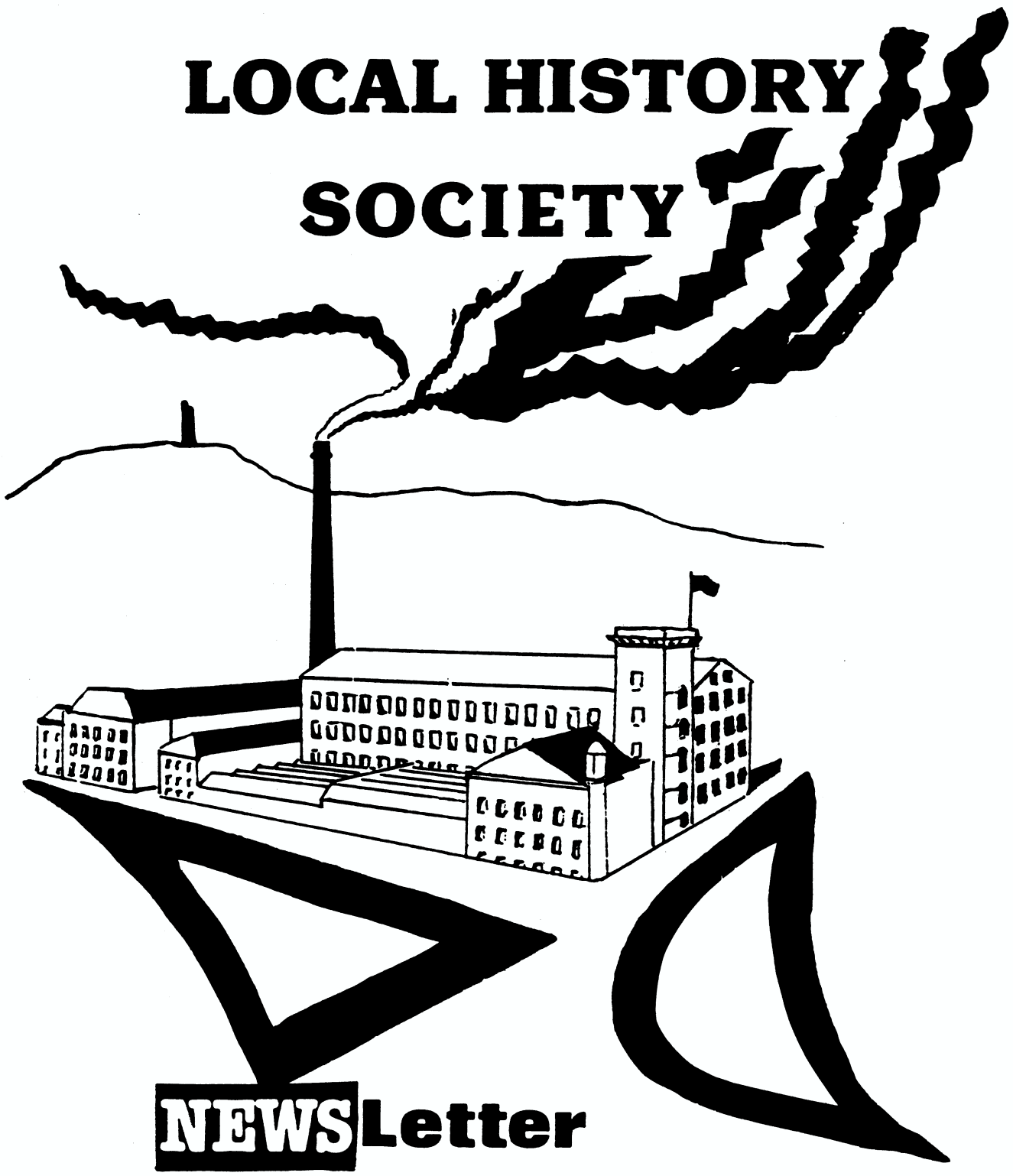
Huddersfield

LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY



NEWS Letter

No. 2 1984

Editorial

The Society continues to flourish, meetings are well attended and excursions are fully booked. There is abundant evidence to suggest that our members are gripped with a strong sense of the past and its influence on the present. It is the aim of the Newsletter to give expression to this interest, to kindle the flame of historical curiosity and to encourage members to burrow into the mountain of historical evidence that literally surrounds us. Two particularly fine examples of such burrowing are published in this issue with the fervent hope that they will bring forth more of the same. Notes and queries on any historic topic dear to members hearts are also eagerly sought. All contributions gratefully received:

Dr D. M. Jones,
C/O The Polytechnic Library,
Queensgate,
HUDDERSFIELD.
HD1 3DH

RECRUITS FOR THE HAVER-CAKE LADS

by John H. Rumsby

Members of the Workshop will be familiar with the illustration in Walker's Costume of Yorkshire (1) depicting a recruiting party of the 33rd Regiment of Foot - later the Duke of Wellington's (West Riding) Regiment. Walker records that the regiment was originally raised in the Halifax district, and gained its local nickname of "Haver-cake Lads" from the recruiting sergeant's custom of carrying a haver-cake, or oat-cake, on the point of his sword. Perhaps this custom was meant to suggest to the would-be recruit that if he joined the army he would never lack for bread! Honour and glory were further inducements, as is indicated by the poster depicted by Walker on the wall of the Inn, which promises "Honor ...Wealth...Fame". The soldiers are distributing cockades, and drink is circulating freely.

All these methods were described by a Scottish recruiting sergeant (2), who makes the point that various potential recruits should be treated in different ways. Thus the plough boys were promised quick promotion, and lodgings in towns where "the pigs and fowls are lying in the streets ready roasted, with knives and forks in them, for the soldier to eat, whenever he pleases." Sentimental chaps", on the other hand, were plied with tales of heroics, and "glory, honour, laurels, drums, trumpets, applauding world, deathless fame, immortality, and all that". This sergeant had been a weaver, and claimed special skill in enlisting from that trade:

> "The truth is, you could scarcely ever catch a weaver contented ...The best way was to make up to the individual you had in your eye, and, after bidding him the time of day, ask him what sort of web he had in. You might be sure it was a bad one, for when a weaver turns lazy his web is always bad; ask him how a clever handsome-looking fellow like him could waste his time handing see-saw between heaven and hell, in a damp unwholesome shop... when he could breathe the pure air of heaven, and have little or nothing to do, if he enlisted for a soldier; that the weaving was going to ruin, and he had better get into some berth, or he might soon be starved."

However, the fish was first hooked, the way to hang on to him was "to get him drunk, blow him up with a fine story, get him inveigled to the magistrate in some shape or other, and get him attested." If the magistrate was in league with the recruiting soldier, so much the better. This is exactly the situation described in a complaint by John Platts, clothier of Honley, to R. H. Beaumont, J.P., on 8th June 1795:

> "The said informant on his oath, saith, that he is about fifteen years of age and on Thursday the 4th day of June ... being in liquor he went to the Swann Inn in Huddersfield,... and got a pint of ale there, about five o'clock in the afternoon, when John Ashburn a Private in the fourth batalion of the Royal Artilary put a shilling into his hand and told him he was enlisted. The said John Ashburn kept this

> complainant intoxicated and took him next day about ten o'clock in the forenoon before a Magistrate at about twenty miles distance and got him attested, though there were several other magistrates nearer ..." (3)

Since the soldier received a bounty for every recruit secured, such measures were well worth the trouble.

Although county titles were allocated to regiments in 1782, recruiting was carried out wherever the regiment was stationed, and also in whichever districts the commanding officer chose to send recruiting parties. (4) The majority of recruits were labourers of one sort or another, but many occupations were represented, especially those of the chief trades in the area concerned. Therefore, Halifax might be expected to produce a good crop of discontented weavers. However, it is interesting to note that Walker's potential recruits include one dressed in an off-white jacket and trousers, trimmed in red - exactly the costume described by him in his Plate III as being typical of Yorkshire coal miners.

In the Public Record Office there is a series of discharge papers which give considerable detail about the soldiers concerned, although only those awarded pensions are included. The following three examples from the 33rd Foot illustrate the type of men recruited during the Napoleonic Wars. (5)

JONATHAN HINCHLIFFE

Born Burton, near Huddersfield.
Enlisted Chatham, Kent, 13th June 1811, aged 24, for unlimited service.
Served 16 years 87 days (plus 2 extra years counted for presence at Waterloo).
Discharged due to "general impaired health and injury to left foot, and worn out."
Conduct: Good.
Description on discharge: Age about 40: height 5' 5¾"; hair dark; eyes grey; complexion fair.
Trade: clothier.
Signed form with a cross, therefore, illiterate.

WILLIAM HILL
Born Aristone (?), Hertfordshire.
Enlisted 3rd April 1809, aged 21.
Served 7 years 111 days (plus 2 extra years counted for Waterloo), in Captain M'Intyre's Company.
Discharged due to gun-shot wound in right arm received at Waterloo.
Description on discharge: age about 28 years; height 5' 8½"; brown hair; grey eyes; fresh complexion.

WILLIAM HOLDSWORTH
Born Halifax, Yorkshire.
Served 2 years 222 days (plus 2 extra years counted for Waterloo), in Captain Langden's Company. Promoted Corporal.
Discharged due to gun-shot wound in left hand received at Waterloo.
Description on discharge; age about 21; height 5' 6"; brown hair; grey eyes; light complexion.
Trade: trunk maker.
Signed form with his name.

The pensions awarded to these men are unfortunately not recorded, but they probably underwent a similar experience to that described by John Green of the 68th (Durham) Light Infantry:

> "After the Commander in chief had taken his place as the president(of the Pension Board), we fell into ranks, just as our names stood on the surgeon's list. The men now began to pass the board, and as they came out, each man was questioned as to what pension he had got. At length it came to my turn: the secretary read my name, the state of my wound, and character, aloud. One of the gentlemen said 'Nine-pence', another 'One shilling'; but the majority were for nine-pence. I made a low bow and left the room." (6)

Postscript

It may be of interest to mention another local veteran of Waterloo, Benjamin Smith, who died in 1845 and was buried in Kirkburton Parish churchyard. He served in the Royal Artillary, and, as his tombstone says, "He fought for his country under the command of Field Marshall the Duke of Wellington at the Memorable Battle of Waterloo". At the top of the stone is carved the reverse design of the medal issued to all troops who served in the Waterloo campaign. Originally the medal was issued with a rather ugly iron ring joining medal and ribbon, and this was often replaced by the recipient with a straight suspender. Such a suspender is shown on the tombstone, and it therefore seems certain that the sculptor used Smith's own medal as a model, rather than a drawing. It would be interesting to know if this medal still exists.

Smith's discharge papers fortunately survive at the Public Record Office (7), and they tell us a little more about him. He was born in Kirkburton, and was a weaver by trade. He enlisted at Sheffield in 1812 at the age of eighteen. Although he enlisted for "unlimited service", he was in fact discharged in 1819, when his battery of artillery was reduced during the shrinkage of the army that followed the end of the Napoleonic Wars. The papers confirm Smith's service at Waterloo, and describe his conduct as "good". Since he 'signed' his name with a cross, he must have been illiterate. He is recorded as being 5 feet 6 inches in height, with brown hair, hazel eyes, and a fair complexion.

Notes and References

(1) George Walker The Costume of Yorkshire, illustrated by a series of Forty engravings (Leeds 1814) Plate XXII.

(2) (Joseph Donaldson) Recollections of an Eventful Life Chiefly passed in the Army (Glasgow 2nd edn. 1825) pp. 167-173
The sergeant's description, as reported by Donaldson, provides one of the most graphic contemporary accounts of recruiting methods. Donaldson's regiment was the 94th Foot - the "Scotch Brigade".

(3) Photostat copy in Tolson Memorial Museum, Huddersfield. Does anyone know the location of the original?

(4) For example, the ranks of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers (23rd Foot) at Waterloo contained 404 Englishmen, 190 Welsh, 63 Irish, 7 Scots, and 3 others (including one born in Florence!). The English came from three main areas, East Anglia, the South-West, and the Midlands, especially the Manchester district. All three areas provided many weavers and other clothworkers, presumably thrown out of work by wartime economic conditions.

Statistics extracted from: N. Holme and E. L. Kirby Medal Rolls: 23rd Foot - Royal Welch Fusiliers. Napoleonic Period (Carnarfon 1978).

(5) Public Record Office: WO.97 series. Kirklees Museums possess the Waterloo Medal awarded to William Holmes of the 33rd Foot, but there is unfortunately no discharge document for him at the P.R.O.

(6) John Green The Vicissitudes of a Soldier's Life (Louth 1827) p. 219. Green served from 1806 to 1815, and took part in many of the great battles of the Peninsular War, before receiving a severe wound during the Battle of the Pyrenees.

(7) WO.97.1262.

READ HOLLIDAY & SONS

Read Holliday was born on the 5th September 1809, and was the third child of Abraham and Mary Holliday of Bradford.

For his first job he worked as a wool spinner for his father at Elwick Mill, Bingley, but then in 1827 he left to work in Wakefield making Salammoniac.

When he left Wakefield, he was not a trained chemist but whilst he was there he gained enough experience to start his own business as a distiller of ammonia in 1830.

To start his business he rented premises at Tanfield, on Leeds Road, and started distilling ammonia from ammoniacal liquor from local gas-works, then sold it at a profit to local mills.

In 1834, he acquired a plot of land at Turnbridge, in Huddersfield, and in 1839 he moved his business to the site as it is today.

Read Hollidays business developed rapidly and in a short space of time he had distilling works in seven Northern towns and a warehouse at Holborn Hill, London.

On the 5th January 1848, Read Holliday took out his first patent on Naphtha Lamps. The lamp was a self-generating gas lamp wherein coal-tar, naphtha and other hydrocarbons could be vapourised and burnt in a gaseous state without a wick.

This lamp brought Holliday the premier prize at the Great Exhibition of 1851.

In 1850, Read Holliday went to Paris to investigate the French coal-tar industry, here he met M. Pelouge who was engaged in work on Benzol. On returning to England, Holliday brought M. Potier (one of Pelouge's assistants) to Turnbridge, from then on the firms interest in the coal-tar industry increased.

Also in 1850, Read became associated with Charles B. Mansfield, a brilliant chemist whose main interest was the coal-tar industry. But sadly in February 1855 while carrying out experiments with coal-tar hydrocarbons for Hollidays, he met with an accident, which severely burnt him and he died at the age of thirty-five.

As well as distilling coal-tar and ammonia, the firm was engaged in the manufacture of Nitro Benzol, Toluol, Aniline and Toluidine, and in 1856 they entered the synthetic colour field, starting with the manufacture of Magenta.

By 1860, Read Hollidays was the largest tar-distiller in the North of England.

The first English firm to make Magenta were Messrs. Simpson, Maule and Nicholson, who produced it under a patent taken out in 1860 by a member of their staff, Dr. Medlock. The patent covered the manufacture of Magenta by the arsenic acid process. Hollidays also made it thisway, but said that Medlock's patent was void, due to lack of description. Simpson's therefore accused all those making Magenta of infringeing their patent. Hollidays refused to accept defeat and entered into a legal battle with them and finally the Lord- Chancellor giving judgement said the patent was "bad and void in law".

During the Magenta litigation, Thomas Holliday (eldest son) went to Brooklyn in the U.S.A. where in 1864 he built a factory for the manufacture of Magenta and Aniline Oils.

The firm's application for a colour patent was made in 1863 by Thomas Holliday. This patent referred to the manufacture of Spirit Blues but was never completed. Yet the presence of this patent indicates that Hollidays were taking an early interest in colour chemistry.

In 1865, John Holliday took out Holliday's first completed patent and was related to "Improvements in obtaining Green Colouring Matters for Dyeing and Printing".

In 1868, Thomas Holliday returned from Brooklyn, and with Charles and Edgar Holliday bought his father's business.

From that day Read took no further active interest in the business, and retired to Harrogate where he interested himslef in building, in fact he built nearly all the buildings in Queens Road in Harrogate.

Then in 1889 Read died at the age of eighty, which left Thomas to succeed him as manager of the English works, and Edgar and John took over the Brooklyn works where Edgar died in 1891.

With the manufacture of Magenta firmly establishing the firm, they expanded their interests to tri-phenyl-methane dyes. By 1870 they were producing Spirit Blues, Nigrosines, Indulines, Methyl Violets and Basic Greens.

In 1871, Hollidays bought the HYDROSULPHITE VAT patent from Schutzenberger and Lalande, under this patent they sent out Indigo ready reduced for the vat, which at that time was an entirely new idea.

In 1874, Dr. Wolff joined the firm, to direct the manufacture of Alizarin, and in 1878 the manufacture of Meta-Phenylene Toluene Diamine, Chrysoidine and Bismarck Brown.

During the years there had been little real change in the methods of dyeing fabrics, but that was soon to change. In 1880 Robert and Thomas Holliday patented an entirely new dyeing process, involving the saturation of the fibre with a neutral ice-cold solution of a diazotised base. The dyes produced therefore, were known as azoic dyes, or ice-colours, the first was called Vacanceine Red.

In 1880, Dr. Scheitling (Dr. Wolff's brother-in-law) joined the firm at Turnbridge and erected a plant for the manufacture of Saffranine and Naphthol Yellow, and a year later azo scarlets were introduced.

From entry into the coal-tar field, Hollidays have made it a policy to become associated with many famous chemists, like Dr. Wolff, Sir Gilbert Morgan who as a youth was at Turnbridge, and Dr. Paul who came to Turnbridge and took out a patent protecting the manufacture of Sodium Nitrate by adding Sulphur Nitrite and Caustic Soda.

There was Dr. I. Petraczek who was responsible for the installation of efficient distillation, nitration and aniline oil plants.

Dr. Ethel, a German chemist, who learned to make Primulene at Turnbridge, then took his process to Kalle & Co.

Another famous chemist was Dr. H. Seiden (German) who joined the Berlin Aniline Co. from Turnbridge and within six months of leaving brought out Columbia Black FF. It was suspected at Holliday's that this dye had been discovered while he was working at Turnbridge.

The period between the years 1860 and 1884 was the golden age of the British Dyestuff Industry; during this time Read Hollidays were making Magenta, Spirit Blue, Nigrosines, Basic Green, Di-methyl-aniline, Aniline and Toluidine. But towards the end of 1873 there was great competition from the continent and gradually the German Industry brought about a decline in England. For example in 1885 German Badische employed 2,500 people but Read Hollidays, the largest British firm employed only 130.

In October 1887 Charles Holliday withdrew from the firm to found with his brother-in-law, Charles Butler, the firm of 'Butler, Holliday & Co.' cloth manufacturers of Rouen in France.

Read Holliday & Sons in the year 1890 were converted into a limited liability company with capital of £200,000. Thomas Holliday was Chairman and Edgar and Robert Holliday were directors. Also at this time the American business was incorporated, making Edgar first president.

The first act of the new board was to purchase land adjoining the works, on which they erected plants for the manufacture of Sulphuric, Nitric and Hydrochloric acids for consumption in the works. Later in the same year the fifty-year old naphtha stills and nitration plant were rebuilt to the design of Thomas Holliday.

Also in 1890, Hollidays Titan colours were patented, these were the firms first direct cotton colours.

A few months later Robert Holliday took out a patent covering the production of Cambine R and Y, but sadly these were never successful due to their sensitivity to iron.

On April 16 1891, Edgar Holliday died in Brooklyn. Before he died he established branches of the firm in Boston and Philadelphia.

In 1896 Joseph and James Turner, two employees, took out the first patent connected with Sulphur colours. Cross-Dyes Black B was the first of these dyes to be put on the market, followed by the most successful one, Cross-Dye Black 4B.

Despite these achievements, in 1899 Hollidays were in serious trouble. Mr. H. Whittaker who joined the firm in 1899 said the firm was in a state of near bankruptcy.

This was probably due to the fact that:

(1) The research staff made few significant advances after ice-colours in 1880.

(2) The company didn't have a very good reputation for the quality of its dyes in general.

(3) The company had too many interests. As well as chemicals and dyestuffs, they made electric dynamos and accetylene gas installations.

In 1898, Thomas Holliday died and was succeeded by Robert Holliday as Chairman.

During Robert's term of office (1899) Hollidays received a contract for the production of picric acid from the war-office, the contract was accepted and sheds for production were erected. This picric acid was responsible for a large explosion in 1900, which badly damaged laboratories and sheds, but despite this, Hollidays still proved extremely profitable, providing funds for gradual modernisation of the works.

Owing to the Boer War the price of Phenol rose quite alarmingly so the company decided to try and make it synthetically by fusing Benzene Mono-Sulphonic Acid with Sulphur Dioxide, the result being much cheaper. Hollidays were the first company in this country to manufacture phenol on a large scale.

Sadly in April 1901, Robert Holliday died, and was succeeded Chairman of the Company by Mr. Joseph Turner (later Sir). During his lifetime Robert together with Charles Holliday, became the founder members and vice-president of the Society of Dyers and Colourists.

In October 1901, Lionel Brook Holliday, only son of Thomas Holliday joined the board and from that date the renaissance of the company began.

From this time the company's energies were concentrated entirely on production of dyestuffs and intermediates.

Read Hollidays from then on prospered, and is well known as one of the oldest established firms in Huddersfield.

J.F.I. Whittell

THE SONS OF READ HOLLIDAY

THOMAS HOLLIDAY 1840 - 1898	Became manager of Turnbridge works on the retirement of his father in 1868. He became the company's first Chairman after incorporation in 1890
CHARLES HOLLIDAY 1843 - 1893	Withdrew from the firm in 1887 to found, with his brother-in-law, the firm 'Butler, Holliday & Co.' Rouen, France. Founder member and vice president of the Society of Dyers and Colourists.
EDGAR HOLLIDAY 1841 - 1891	Took over control of the American works at Brooklyn in 1869. Became the American Company's first president on incorporation, Remained in America until his death.
JOHN HOLLIDAY 1845 - 1894	Started his career in the family firm, but later withdrew, on the advice of friends to enter into metallurgy. Founded a successful laboratory in New York as an Assayer.
ROBERT HOLLIDAY 1855 - 1901	Became Chairman of the company on the death of his brother Thomas, in 1898. Founder member and president (1894-95) of the Society of Dyers and Colourists.

I commenced work at L. B. Hollidays as a Lab. boy after leaving school about 1922. I went to the 'Tech' at nights reading for a London external degree. However, because of weakness in maths I failed twice at inter stage in spite of taking extra workings. I passed the City and Guilds HNC as a small consolation. When the big slump came in 1933 I was still only a glorified Lab. boy, and had to leave, though with a good testimonial. However, our local textile firm, Broadhead and Greaves, were starting a small lab to test new products and I was offered the job of organising it. I stayed there till the war came, and I was drafted to Standard Fireworks, who had been put on Government contracts. I had the satisfaction of having saved my old firm a not inconsiderable sum on their costs.

After the war I returned to civil duties and studied work at the new College of Education for Technical Teachers, as a Technician in the Chem. Lab. I stayed there till retiring in 1972.

During retirement I developed an interest in local history and genealogy with a view to digging into my ancestry. I joined the Local History Workshop and decided to combine my two interests in tackling this project, which I have now completed.

J. F. I. Whittell

I forgot to say that I lived in Kirkheaton till 1943 where my father was teaching and we came to our present address after he retired.

TEXTILE HISTORY GROUP

Following the very successful joint exhibition of the THG and Tolson Museum in September-November of last year the group has lost some of its cohesion in the absence of any clear focus for future research. However, members are continuing to research into their diverse fields of interest and are eager to involve others.

A card index of known references to local mills prior to 1870 has almost been completed and, while no means being definitive, is a useful guide to Workshop members who may wish to begin a study of a particular mill or mill in their locality.

A slide collection of mills in the area has also been built up which is not complete but provides quite a comprehensive photographic record of mill architecture. A number of black and white photographs have been deposited in the Local History Library.

There is still plenty scope for research in the industrial archaeology, documentary and oral history fields and Alan Brooke would be pleased to put interested members in touch with THG researchers or to provide references. We would also be grateful to receive members suggestions about joint projects.

A. Brooke

LISTING OF RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

The Society has received the following communications:

6th February, 1984.

Dear Mrs. Haigh,

I am writing to enlist your help in establishing an on-going listing of current research activities relating to the county of West Yorkshire.

Because of the several record depositories, many educational institutions with research interests, as well as many active local historical societies, it is, I believe, particularly difficult in West Yorkshire to keep in touch with research in progress. I have encountered duplication of effort in the past and I know others have suffered through the problem.

The West Yorkshire Archive Service now produces, twice yearly, a West Yorkshire History Newsletter entitled 'For the Record'. Copies are displayed at all the Record Offices of the Service and are also available from the headquarters in Wakefield. The County Archivist, Mrs. E. K. Berry has kindly agreed to allow space for a regular listing of names, addresses and brief titles (max. 20 words) of historical research relating to the County and I have offered to co-ordinate the information for publication. It is hoped that the listing will make researchers aware of each others interests, thereby avoiding duplication of effort and perhaps leading to greater co-operation.

I would be most grateful if you would make known the research listing to members of your Society and encourage them to send me details of their research so that the listing may be as comprehensive as possible.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. D. T. Jenkins - University of York,
Department of Economics,
York.
YO1 5DD.

COMMITTEE NOTICE

Mr. Dibnah, our Chairman since last September, has resigned from the Committee. Mr. Tom Wainwright has taken over as Chairman but another Committee Member is required. Please forward nominations, together with the written consent of the nominee, to Mrs. Haigh at 30 Stonecliffe Drive, Middlestown, Wakefield. WF4 4DD.

MECHANICS INSTITUTE ARCHIVES

Huddersfield Polytechnic as the successor institute to the Mechanics Institute has a substantial collection of records of that body which are housed in the Polytechnic Library. The Library is now running an exhibition showing highlights from the work of the old Mechanics Institute as well as the Female Mechanics Institute. The Library is open to the public from 9.00 a.m. to 9.00 p.m. in term time and from 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. in vacation.

Members are reminded that the Polytechnic Library contains substantial collections of material related to local history. As well as items on the history of the West Riding there is also the Rolls Series, of particular value to those interested in genealogy.

GENEALOGY GROUP

In view of the considerable interest members have shown in family history, is the time now ripe to form a group? Anyone interested in exchanging ideas and information should contact Mrs. Haigh.

CONFEDERATION OF WEST RIDING LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETIES

The confederation aims to bring together societies with an interest in local history. So far sixteen societies have joined the confederation and the HLHW representatives are Mrs. Haigh and Mr. S. Sheard. At a recent meeting hosted by HLHW at Banney Royd Mr. Cyril Pearce was elected Chairman.

HUDDERSFIELD LOCAL HISTORY WORKSHOP

EXCURSION

JUNE 25 1984

VISIT TO KIRKLEES HALL

For our excursion this year, a visit has been arranged to Kirklees Hall, home of Lady Armytage. The Hall is not open to the public and we are grateful to Lady Armytage for allowing our visit. Our guide will be Mr. David Nortcliffe, West Yorkshire Countryside Officer and authority on the Kirklees Estate.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

'Huddersfield in Old Picture Postcards' is to be reprinted.

'Holme Valley in Old Picture Postcards' is in preparation.

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